

Kesher Israel Board Meeting Minutes – August 13, 2007

Attendees: Rabbi Barry Freundel, Gary Winters, Ken Weinstein, Roz Singer, Al Altschul, Jesse Mendelson, Elanit Rothschild, Elana Lederman, Seth Opert, David Epstein.

1. Dvar Torah – There is an interesting balancing act that occurs when there are more people in shul for HH. Does that change the sanctity of the synagogue? No. It doesn't change what you can or can't do with the synagogue.
2. July Minutes Approved.
3. New Members
 - a. Laura Horovitz, under 28; Scott and Ilana Mathias, family; Laura Baron, single student – Approved without objection
4. Board Vote – replacement needed for Marty Ramirez as Financial Secretary. David Levin (already a gabbai) is appointed by Gary as Recording Secretary. We'll vote over email because we don't have a quorum. Jesse Mendelson will move over to Marty's position as Financial Secretary.
5. 2007-2008 Budget – Al Altschul gave a review of the budget.
 - a. Some items are higher:
 - i. \$20,000 paid to Rabbi Oz included in Salaries/Benefits
 - ii. Spiraling costs in 2006 – health insurance, utilities, salaries/benefits
 - iii. The amount to be raised is extremely ambitious. The “plug number” (fundraising number) is higher than ever before, so we need to make sure we get that.
 1. Roz said we need more than one major event, and Gary said that the pre-Kol Nidre evening at the Tinskys will hopefully gather a lot more money than previous years
 - a. We need to be ambitious with our asking, perhaps with a suggested amount
 2. Gary asked Susan Ross to make a little handout of finances to look at state of shul
 3. Rae Ringel suggested having one or two longtime stalwart supporters speak at the event to tell why they support the way that they do
 - a. Roz thinks it's a good idea, but we need to create the speech, and have them embellish it
 4. Elanit wanted to know about having donations around Hachnasat Sefer Torah (happening Nov 4)
 - a. Gamliel and the Rabbi have discussed logistics of the day, but we need to continue the conversation now

- i. Standard way of doing donations is for people to pay for various honors – leaf, column, line, word, letter, etc
 - ii. We need to create interest in the event, especially since many donors will not be members of the shul
- iv. Given that we're coming into this year without a surplus, we need to be careful about larger expenditures (like no siddurim or post-Pesach lunch without explicit permission, for now) while we wait to see if the pledges come in
- v. Roz wants some help on the Fundraising Committee so we can focus on the year, not just the dinner
- vi. Gary hopes to have more of an individual-type session with individual donors

6. Dues Structure

- a. Single dues are proportionally more than family dues; this is a perennial issue, and warrants board consideration, but not much can change this year. The historical assumption that there is only one wage earner per family keeps the number lower, and that is still the case.
- b. Gary asked if the structure is unfair, since we're unwilling to base dues as percentage of income, and would like the backing of the Board that this can be the official position
 - i. Al says that Dave Sloan did a project to find dues prices for synagogues around the area, and ours are quite low comparatively
 - ii. Rabbi said this discussion has been around for many years – it should be higher than half, but how much higher is the question
 - 1. Perhaps next time we raise dues we'll only the family dues

7. Bayit Kitchen

- a. A volunteer group has been working on it, and has done a great job so far (library space, etc)
- b. The Bayit Committee wants to know if they can make some basic cosmetic repairs to the Bayit
- c. The current plan is to have the Buildings and Grounds Committee make the kitchen into a storage space
 - i. Roz says that regardless of the storage space, we need to have a fridge (which we have) and running water (which we don't)
- d. Shoshana has been told to contract with a junk removal company to remove the junk from the kitchen and the upstairs – this is the construction project for this year
- e. David Barak wants to know what we're doing about non-cosmetic repairs in the Bayit, and Gary said there doesn't appear to have any structural damage
 - i. Bottom line – Whatever is done will have to be done inexpensively

8. Furniture
 - a. As a result of the renovation, Al Moses has offered \$25,000 to replace the Bimah furniture. David Epstein told him that if the Board is called upon to raise any money, it will not. There is a furniture designer who has done some work for Al and the family, and it looks good. The basic notion would be that all of the furniture would change – new shulchan, 4 new chairs, at least 2 stands where the notes could go, as well as a place for the crowns, etc. At some point, it will be presented to the Board.
 - b. On the matter of chairs, the brown stacking chairs will be replaced. David Epstein will use the Ellen Epstein Fund for the Preservation of Keshet Israel to replace the brown chairs, in order so that he can have 60 or 70 endowed chairs.
9. The chairs in the front row of the women's section are overstuffed, and don't close, and during the final walkthrough, the contractor said this is the best that can be done.
10. Ken has been working with his furniture wholesaler, and will have samples of the chairs next week. But he and David Epstein will coordinate to figure out what we're getting.
11. Classes:
 - a. The Rabbi will give two High Holiday shiurim before Rosh Hashana; Classes start October 8; the Green Group will be doing a Simchat Beit Hashoeva; the New Faces Lunch will be October 13; Scholar in Residence (Seth Farber) is coming October 19; November 4 is Hachnasat Sefer Torah; Ken Weinstein will talk to Michael Oren about a speech; there is a potential Chanuka program on December 9 (Seth Opert and Gary met with leaders of DC Minyan, and hit on Chanuka as a possibility, as well as an oneg, Yom Ha'atzmaut, etc); Women's Rosh Chodesh and Rabbinic Intern are standard once per month; Shabbat T'Lamdeni and Tu B'Shvat will be in January; Mystery Guest Shabbat will be on February 8; and there will be programs leading up to Yom Hazikaron/Yom Ha'atzmaut on May 9-10.
 - b. Rabbi mentioned that Jeremy Rabkin is a possibility as a speaker
 - c. Rabbi asked Yoel Oz and Alan Gersch to have a mitzvah day sometime during the High Holidays.
12. Seth Opert wants to know who the liaison to Shoshana will be for TempleTracker (the fundraising database system), and he is concerned that we will get no value from the program if we do not find someone to assist her. People who are aware of people who can support Shoshana will talk to them.

Meeting adjourned.